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ABSTRACT

This annual report details the accomplishments of the Alaska Head Start Program for fiscal year 1998. The report begins with a graphic presentation of the locations of Alaska Head Start programs and a table delineating the administrative and program partners of Head Start, its service population, eligibility requirements, funding sources, service models, and targeted services. The report continues with a description of the Head Start program and its core values, and outlines the performance standards for the following areas: (1) early childhood development and health services; (2) family and community partnerships; and (3) program design and management. The successful application of performance standards for developing promising practices is discussed through descriptions of 15 Head Start programs and their initiatives. The report delineates the goals of the Alaska Head Start State Collaboration Project and presents trend data on enrollment, services provided, and funding received from 1992 to 1998. The report concludes with an organizational chart of the relationships among Head Start programs within the network of Alaskan state agencies, and a list of Alaska Head Start Directors and Support Systems. (KB)

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Alaska Head Start

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Making a Difference in Alaska by:

- *Enhancing our children's growth and development*
- *Strengthening families as the primary nurturers of their children*
- *Providing children with education, health and nutrition services*
- *Linking children and families to needed community services*
- *Promoting high quality, effective programs with qualified staff*

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Annual Report for 1998

State of Alaska • Department of Community & Regional Affairs • Mike Irwin, Commissioner

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Alaska Head Start Programs

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KAWERAK
Brevig Mission
Diomede
Elim
Gambell
Golovin
Koyuk
Nome
Shishmaref
St. Michael
Shaktoolik
Teller
Wales
White Mountain

RURAL-CAP
Alakanuk
Chevak
Emmonak
Haines
Homer
Hooper Bay
Hydaburg
Kake
Ketchikan
Kluti Kaah
Kodiak
Kwethluk
Marshall
Mt. Village
Napaskiak
Noorvik
Savoonga
Selawik
Seward
Stebbins
Toksook Bay
Rural CAP/EHS:
Akiak
Nunapitchuk
Pilot Station
St. Mary's

CHUGACHMIUT
Nanwalek
Port Graham
Eyak

TANANA CHIEFS
Holy Cross
Huslia
Kaltag
Koyukuk
McGrath
Nulato
Ruby
Tanana

CHUGIAK CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Big Lake
Chugiak
Eagle River
Houston
Palmer
Wasilla

ASSOC. OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS
Akiachak
Bethel
Kalskag
Kasiqluk
Kotlik
Pilot Station
Quinhagak
Scammon Bay
Tuluksak

ALEUTIAN/PRIBOLOF ISLANDS ASSOC.
King Cove
Sand Point
St. George
St. Paul
Unalaska

NATIVE VILLAGE OF TYONEK
Tyonek

TLINGIT & HAIDA CENTRAL COUNCIL
Angoon
Craig
Hoonah
Juneau
Klawock
Petersburg
Saxman
Sitka
Wrangell
Yakutat

UPPER TANANA PARENT-CHILD PROGRAM
Eagle
Northway
Tok

METLAKATLA INDIAN COMMUNITY
Metlakatla

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION
Dillingham
Manokotak
Newhalen
New Stuyahok
Togiak

KID'S CORPS, INC.
Anchorage

SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION
Anchorage

ADULT LEARNING PROGRAMS OF ALASKA
Fairbanks

FAIRBANKS NATIVE ASSOCIATION
Fairbanks center based
Fairbanks Early Head Start

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE IRA
Kenai
Soldotna
Nikiski

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Alaska Head Start Program
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1998 Program Information — Alaska Head Start at a glance

Program

Alaska Head Start

Administrative Partners
Department of Community & Regional Affairs

Federal Head Start Bureau (funding directly to grantees)

Region X - in Seattle

Region XI AIPB - in Washington, DC

Program Partners
Disabilities Service Quality Improvement Center (T & TA provider for Head Start in Alaska)

Head Start State Collaboration Project

Service Population

Children & their Families

838, age 0 - 3

2,394, age 3 - 5

440 children w/ disabilities

3,232 total children served

22% eligible children served

Families
2,870 families of enrolled children received services

Staff
615 Head Start staff

321 staff are/were former parents

Communities
94 communities served by program

Eligibility Requirements

Family Income Guidelines for Alaska:

Family Size	Income
1	$ 9,870
2	13,270
3	16,670
4	20,070
5	23,470
6	26,870
7	30,270
8	33,670

for families with more than 8, add $3,400 for each additional member

Disability
Children with disabilities do not have to meet income guidelines. At least 10% of enrolled population must be disabled.

Funding Sources

$5,489,951 State (24%)

$15,603,694 Federal (57%)

$4,249,339 Community (15%)

Service Models

Service Model determined by community needs - Models include:

Early Head Start weekly home visits with two group experiences per month (0-3)

Center Based - Full Head Start services provided at Head Start Center full or half day programs. Children and families receive minimum of 2 home visits, 2 meals provided

Home visit - Full Head Start services provided in-home, minimum of 1 weekly visit, 2 group experiences each month

Center based model can also include home visit option

Local Option determined by community, —approved by Policy Council and meets Head Start Performance Standards

Targeted Services

- Health Screenings Follow-up and Treatment for:
  - dental
  - nutrition
  - social emotional
  - mental
  - disabilities
- Education programs
- Parent Involvement
- Parent Education Training
- Staff & Parent Career development & Job Training
- Social Services
- Disabilities

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Alaska Head Start Program
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Making a Difference in Alaska

Head Start and Early Head Start are comprehensive child development programs which serve children from birth to age 5, pregnant women and their families. They are child-focused programs that **have the overall goal of increasing the social competence of young children in low-income families. "Social Competence" is defined as the child's everyday effectiveness in dealing with both his or her present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. Social competence takes into account the interrelatedness of social, emotional, cognitive and physical development, health and nutritional needs.**

Head Start services are family-centered, following the belief that children develop in the context of their family and culture, and that parents are respected as the primary educators and nurturers of their children. Head Start also offers family members opportunities for growth and change, believing that people can identify their own strengths, needs, interests, and solutions to problems.

To support the overall goal of social competence and to promote family-strengths, Head Start embraces a core set of values, including the commitment to:

- **Establish a supportive learning environment for children, parents and staff.**
- **Recognize that members of the Head Start community - children, families, and staff - have roots in many cultures.** Working together as a team, the community can promote respectful, sensitive, and proactive approaches to diversity issues.
- **Understand that the growth of families occurs when program management is shared** by families, staff and policy makers, and when the ideas and opinions of families are respected and heard.
- **Embrace a comprehensive vision of health for children families and staff,** which assures that basic health needs are met, encourages practices that prevent illness, injury, and disabilities; and promotes positive, culturally relevant health behaviors.
- **Respect the importance of all aspects of an individual's development,** including social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth.
- **Build a community in which each child and adult is treated as an individual** while reinforcing a sense of belonging to the Head Start community.
- **Foster relationships with the community in which Head Start children and families live.**
- **Develop a continuum of care, education, and services** that allow stable, uninterrupted support to children and families during and after their Head Start experience.

Head Start Performance Standards

Head Start strives for excellence in program management and delivery of all Head Start comprehensive services. A guiding force for program excellence are the Head Start Program Performance Standards. These Standards are designed to ensure that the Head Start goals and objectives are implemented successfully, that the Head Start philosophy continues to thrive, and that all grantee and delegate agencies maintain the highest possible quality in the provision of Head Start services. The Head Start Program Performance Standards are the mandatory regulations that grantee and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start program. The standards define the objectives and features of a quality Head Start program in concrete terms; they articulate a vision of service delivery to children and their families; and they provide a regulatory structure for the monitoring and enforcement of quality standards.

The Head Start Performance Standards are divided into three sections: Early Childhood Development and Health Services, Family and Community Partnerships, and Program Design and Management. Within each of these parts, standards have been developed for all aspects of the Head Start program. The following pages contain a summary of the Head Start Program Standards that guide Head Start Programs in Alaska.

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Alaska Head Start Program

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Early Childhood Development and Health Services Performance Standards

Health/Safety

Required Mental Health Services:
- provide parent education on mental health issues
- identify family concerns about child mental health
- share staff observations with parents on behavior/ mental health issues
- support parents with needed interventions
- secure service of mental health professional for timely identification & intervention in family, staff concerns for child mental health
- design & implement program for response to identified behavioral & mental health concerns to promote child/family well-being & assist in providing special help for atypical behavior & development

Physical Health
- develop program for follow-up & treatment for problems identified by health screening including health, vision, hearing, immunizations, well-child check ups, dental treatment & education, disabilities, growth & development
- establish program for on-going health screenings, follow-up & treatment
- provide parent education on preventive health practices & early intervention

Education

Required Education Program must:
- be developmentally & linguistically, culturally, age appropriate
- include parents in process & planning
- support each child's individual pattern of development & learning
- provide individual & small group activities indoors & outdoors
- develop Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each child based on screenings, assessments, findings
- support development of child emerging skills in:
  - language
  - literacy
  - numerical
  - cognitive reasoning
  - problem solving
  - decision making
- develop a foundation for school readiness
- develop transition process for public school entry
- include child & teacher/ adult directed activities

- establish & maintain procedures for emergency response, first aid, child abuse & neglect reporting, short-term illness exclusion, medication administration, safe handling of wastes, injury prevention, etc.

Screenings

Required Child Screenings include:

- completing of scheduled well-child checkups
- vision
- hearing
- dental
- physical growth & development
- nutrition
- immunization
- developmental for motor, language, social , cognitive, perceptual, emotional skills
- disabilities
- mental health

Screenings must be sensitive to child/family culture, language and involve child's family

Family Screenings include:
- access to health care sources
- family strength risk factors
- all children must have health screening within 90 calendar days
- developmental, sensory, behavioral screenings must take place within 45 calendar days

Disabilities

Required Services include:

- screening, referral
- follow-up parent education follow-up, treatment for condition identified in screenings
- referrals to disabilities programs such as Infant Learning Program, school district
- development of service plan for special needs
- inclusion of children with disabilities in regular Head Start programs

Nutrition

Required Nutritional Services include:

- nutritional screening & assessment
- develop individual nutrition program that addresses
  - child nutrition needs
  - cultural meal preferences
  - special dietary requirements
  - age appropriate dietary needs
- meals & snacks for center-based programs that provide1/3 nutritional requirements for half-day program; 1/2 to 2/3 requirement for full day
- promote dental hygiene in conjunction with meals
- integrate meal, nutrition program in educational curriculum
- provide parent education on family nutrition

Social/ Emotional

Required Program components include:

- enhancing child's understanding of self as individual and member of group
- provide opportunities to help child develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, positive attitudes toward learning
- helps child develop emotional security and social relationships
- assists family in securing support and services for family well-being, such as housing, food, job training, employment, medical care, mental health services

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Family and Community Partnerships Performance Standards

Family Partnerships

Upon enrollment in Head Start, staff must begin process of building partnership with parents to establish mutual trust and to identify family goals, strengths, necessary services & support. Parents must be given an opportunity to:

- develop & implement individualized Family Partnership Agreement
- interact continually with Head Start
- receive support to access services & resources necessary to achieve family goals
- receive emergency or crisis assistance
- receive continuing education & employment training & services
- receive appropriate interventions such as counseling, education on mental health issues, substance abuse, etc.

Community Partnerships

Head Start programs are required to take an active role in their community by:

- sharing information among agencies to improve child/family services
- establishing a Health Services Advisory Committee which includes professionals & volunteers from within community
- establish other advisory committees as appropriate to local program & community
- sharing training & education opportunities between Head Start & community
- conducting a Community Assessment to assess resources, strengths & needs of community programs & services for children/families

Program Collaboration

Head Start State Collaboration grants are awarded to states to develop higher level of collaboration between Head Start & other state, federal & community programs. Establishing collaborative relationships to promote access to services including:

- health care providers
- mental health providers
- nutritional service providers
- disability providers
- family preservation & support
- AmeriCorps
- child protective services
- elementary schools
- other educational services
- child care providers
- other organizations & businesses
- developing MOAs with agencies regarding services for children with disabilities
- establishing & maintaining procedures & support successful transitions into & out of Head Start by establishing relationships with schools, child care, Infant Learning, other early childhood programs

Training/ Education

Opportunities for continued training & education must be provided to staff, volunteers, families for/on:

- Head Start program development, goals,
- standards
- early childhood development
- preventive health care, including medical, dental, mental, nutrition
- career development, job placement
- Head Start decision making processes
- Family & personal Wellness programs

National Head Start Association provides training opportunities through:

- National Training guidelines
- annual Head Start Association conference
- National training for staff and parents

Family/Parent Involvement

Head Start must provide opportunities for parents to:

- be involved in program policy making decisions
- have educational activities appropriate to their expressed needs
- visit & observe & participate with children participate in program as volunteers & employees
- be included in development of program's curriculum, education & child development activities
- enhance parenting skills, knowledge & understanding of child development needs
- participate in family literacy programs
- participate in staff-parent conferences -minimum of 2 per year
- receive medical, dental, nutrition & mental health education
- receive assistance in enrolling in & receiving family health care
- become active partners in their children's medical & dental health care
- have opportunity to learn principles of preventive medical/dental, health, nutrition education
- identify & discuss child & family mental health issues
- be actively involved in implementing any mental health interventions

Early Head Start Model

Early Head Start is based on four cornerstones:

- child development
- family development
- community building
- staff development

Head Start provides pregnant women & families with children from prenatal to age 3 with the full range of Head Start services. Comprehensive health, education, training, parent involvement, nutrition services are specific to age and stage of development.

Head Start staff must meet required training & education requirements for infant/toddler care.

Facilities must meet safety/health requirements for infant/toddler populations.

Pregnant women receive appropriate health/nutrition education, screenings & treatment.

- receive comprehensive information about community resources
- work together & with other community members on programs/activities
- participate in transition activities into & out of Head Start
- receive education & training in continued involvement in their children's future education
- participate in home visits

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Program Design and Management Performance Standards

Staff Training/ Qualifications

Head Start Standards require:

- current & former parents receive employment preference
- staff that represent the ethnic, cultural background of families; able to communicate in home language
- staff qualified in theory of principles of early childhood growth & development, early childhood education, family support
- health providers experienced in public health, nursing, health education, maternal child health
- staff providing services for nutrition, mental health, disabilities, medical procedures, must have applicable licensing
- staff providing home visiting services, family services, parent involvement, infant/toddler services, must be educated in applicable professional fields
- training/orientation about goals/requirements for Head Start provided for all new staff
- training/orientation about goals/requirements for Head Start provided for all new staff
- programs must establish & implement training & education system with academic credit, career development opportunities for career advancement in Head Start or related fields
- training in identifying & reporting abuse & neglect
- training in transition planning for families into & out of Head Start
- abide by Head Start standards of conduct, health & wellness guidelines
- every classroom must have a CDA or early childhood professional

Program Evaluation

Programs must develop & implement on-going process for planning that includes:

- community assessment
- developing multi-year program goals & short term goals & financial objectives
- develop written plans for implementing services in all program parts
- review plans & progress in meeting them by staff, policy council, parent committee at least annually
- revise & update plans as needed
- conduct yearly self-assessment
- establish & implement procedures for on-going monitoring of all local programs & grantee program
- develop plans & time-tables to correct identified differences & problems

On a 3 year rotating basis, all grantees receive joint federal & state on-site review for compliance with Head Start Performance Standards

MIS Data/Reporting

Head Start programs must have Program Information Systems to provide:

- accurate & timely information on child/family/staff
- generate monthly reports on status of finances
- required reports for state, federal, local, or other organizations quarterly
- specific program data on all program components such as immunizations, health screenings, etc.
- year end Program Information Report for feds, & state

Program Structure

Head Start is a nation-wide comprehensive child/family program. All Head Start programs are required to comply with requirements of Head Start Program Performance Standards 45CFR Part 1304.

Head Start is funded by federal and state grants to Head Start grantees who establish and administer local Head Start programs. Federal oversight is provided through monitoring by feds & state

The Head Start Association provides coordination, training, collaboration between all local programs.

Head Start parents, staff & friends can be members of the State and National Head Start Associations.

Decision Making Systems

Head Start must establish & maintain shared governance structure through which parents share in decision making & must consist of:
Policy Council and/or
Policy Committee
established at grantee level comprised of parents (51%) & community representatives

Responsibility of policy groups are:

- funding, applications
- program planning, goals
- program assessment audit
- personnel policies (contact, hiring, termination)
- link to parent committee, grantee management staff, state/federal agencies & organization

Parent Committee
established at local program level comprised of parent members only

Responsibilities include:

- advise staff in developing & implementing local program policies, services
- plan, conduct & participate in programs & activities for parents
- participate in recruitment & screening of Head Start employees

Facilities

Head Start physical environments & facilities must:

- comply with all health, safety, fire regulations of federal and state standards
- comply with standards for ADA
- facilities must have minimum of 35 sq. feet of usable indoor space per child
- space must be organized into functional areas that support early childhood growth & development
- materials, equipment, toys, must be supportive of educational objectives, cultural & ethnic backgrounds, age-appropriate, safe, provide variety of learning experiences
- facilities are locally owned-maintained by Head Start to meet federal & state mandate for Head Start facilities

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Making a Differences in Alaska's Communities through Promising Practices

Over the years, a major strength of the Head Start Performance Standards has been their flexibility and recognition that each Head Start program in each community is unique. The Standards encourage each local program to use a variety of approaches that will meet the individual needs of their children, families and communities.

Head Start programs in Alaska serve diverse and culturally rich populations. Each Head Start programs offers unique challenges and opportunities, from the largest programs in urban areas to the smallest ones in isolated villages. Alaska Head Start programs take into consideration, not only cultural and geographic differences, but the supports, services, and needs present in each community. In many instances, meeting the mandatory requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards while honoring the unique characteristics of each family and community, has presented challenges for Alaska Head Start programs. But in characteristic Alaskan style, these challenges have been turned into innovative promising practices that are worthy of recognition both on a state and national level.

Following are examples of the ways Alaska Head Start Programs have used the Performance Standards to develop promising practices for Alaska's children and families.

Community Legacies—Tanana Chiefs Head Start
Head Start Performance Standards 1304.21 *". . . provide an environment of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity and family composition."*

Tanana Chiefs Head Start has developed a curriculum for their Head Start programs designed to support and pass the legacy of traditional culture to their Head Start children. For pre-school children, culture is what is happening around them. A child's culture is made up of:

- traditional things from the past that elders do
- traditional things that are being done in new ways with new technologies and,
- new things that people have incorporated into village life.

The Community Legacies curriculum supports children to grow up strong, feeling good about their community background and proud of the people around them from the oldest elder to the youngest Mom or Dad. The curriculum is designed to be an on-going process, building activities in four main areas: winter, summer, celebrating the arts and child care. Parents and staff develop activities and make materials for each Head Start site or for individual families in home-based programs. As activities are planned, parent groups, Policy Council members and staff add new ideas so the ideas keep growing. Some communities have found ways to incorporate local languages into the curriculum as well. Each community group comes up with their own ways of using and adding to the curriculum. Some of the activities that have been developed are: Celebrating the Arts - making music, beads and quilts, baskets, dance, story makers; Winter - transportation, ice fishing, skies and weather, basketball; Child care - wellness, prenatal care, growing up, health and safety; Summer - plant foods and berries, river travel, sports, fire fighting, fish camp.

Tanana Chiefs Head Start serves children prenatal through age four, in Holy Cross, Huslia, Kaltag, Koyukuk, McGrath, Nulato, and Ruby, Alaska. Head Start services are provided through both home-visitor and center-based programs.

Apprentice Teacher Program — Kids' Corps, Inc.
Head Start Standard 1304.52 (b). Staff qualifications . . *"Grantee and delegate agencies must ensure that staff and consultants have the knowledge, skills, and experience they need to perform their assigned functions responsibly. . . In addition, grantee and delegate agencies must ensure that only candidates with the qualifications specified in this part and in 45 CFR 1306.21 are hired."*

Many Head Start programs are having problems meeting the requirements of this Head Start Performance Standard, including the Kids' Corps program in Anchorage. Kids' Corps began experiencing problems in recruiting qualified teachers two years ago in the Anchorage area. Recruitment efforts would result in only 1 or 2 qualified applicants for 3 or 4 open teacher positions. It soon became apparent that a new approach was going to be necessary to recruit and maintain qualified teachers to work in their Head Start classrooms. The creative approach taken by Kids' Corps was to develop an Apprentice Teacher position in 1997. Apprentice teachers are hired who are high school graduates with 24 months of experience working with preschool children. They are paired with qualified teachers in a co-teaching situation. Apprentice teachers receive on the

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job training and assistance with completion of their CDA within 12 months of their date of hire. The first apprentice teachers were hired through in-house recruitment efforts. They successfully completed their CDA and other job requirements within the first 6 months of their position change. In the following year, 4 more apprentice teachers completed their CDA and several others are at various stages of completion. One unexpected benefit of the program is that Head Start parents find it less intimidating to apply for a teaching position. With the obvious success of this program, Kids' Corps is working out the details for beginning an apprentice bus driver program. If this proves to also be successful, they may expand the program into other work areas. It seems that the best response to the current shortage in qualified applicants for Head Start programs is to provide in-house training and career advancement.

Kids' Corps Head Start provides comprehensive services to children birth through age four in the Anchorage area. Services are provided through center-based and home-visitor programs.

Public School, Head Start Collaboration — Upper Tanana Head Start.

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.41 . . ." *establish and maintain procedures to support successful transitions for enrolled children and families from Head Start into elementary school, and . . . outreach to encourage communication between Head Start staff and their counterparts in the schools and other settings..."*

The Upper Tanana Head Start Program has established a collaborative relationship with local schools that provides long lasting benefits for both Head Start children and their families. The Eagle and Northway Head Start programs, who operate home-visitor programs, use the local school facilities for group social experiences. In Eagle, the children have use of the gym which provides an excellent opportunity for children to develop gross motor skills. At both sites, there is strong school and community support for Head Start. Providing adequate space for group socials is considered a high priority. Head Start is recognized in both communities as the provider of comprehensive early childhood services. Use of school rooms for group socials provides a "natural" transition for Head Start children into the program and then on to the "big school." There is also positive interaction with other children and adults in the school who often drop by to help out and visit with the children. This serves to increase general knowledge and support of Head Start and its importance to the children and families of the communities. In these communities where needed services are limited, the use of school space helps Head Start to provide services to more children. Classroom space that meets Head Start health and safety standards is sometimes hard to find, so the use of school space helps to meet that need as well as provide other benefits.

Upper Tanana Head Start serves children birth through age four, through home-visitor and center-based programs in Eagle, Northway, and Tok, Alaska.

Linking our Voices, Parents as Partners - RurAL CAP Head Start

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.50 . . *"Grantee and delegate agencies must establish and maintain a formal structure of shared governance through which parents can participate in policy making or in other decisions about the program . . . "*

RurAL CAP Head Start Programs have developed a comprehensive training program to help parents become familiar with Head Start program management and decision making processes, and to act as advocates and mentors for other parents in their community. One parent from each community is selected to participate in a Regional Parent Committee. This committee is brought together for a two-day training in their region. The training provides information on : 1) how Congress authorizes the Head Start program and determines funding; 2) what federal regulations guide the program; 3) how Outcome Measures are used to determine program effectiveness; 4) the roles and responsibilities the local Parent Committee, Policy Council and Board of Directors; 5) how to facilitate and participate in a meeting; and 6) how grants are written. Each parent actually writes a mini-grant to fund a family activity which requires them to follow the steps found in most funding applications. These trainings are followed up with periodic meetings, where parents use these skills to participate in program decisions. The training is provided to one parent from each of the communities RurAL CAP serves. These parents are asked to take back the information to their local communities and share it with other parents on the local Head Start committee. The first group of parents who completed this training have just completed their first terms as Regional Parent Committee Representatives and Child Development Policy Council members. During their terms, they were able to make significant contributions to directing a large program, and reported increased skills and confidence in participating in decision making groups. They have learned how to advocate for their children and do so. Parents who just received the training are highly motivated to participate in their child's education and are looking forward to using the new skills they have gained in upcoming meetings. They left the training eager to use the information gained in their local communities with their Parent Committees.

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RurAL CAP Head Start serves children birth through age four, at Alakanuk, Chevak, Emmonak, Haines, Homer, Hooper Bay, Hydaburg, Kake, Ketchikan, Copper Center, Kodiak, Kwethluk, Marshall, Mountain Village, Napaskiak, Noorvik, Savoonga, Selawik, Seward, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Unalakleet, Alaska.

Parent/Guardian Involvement Project —
Metlakatla Indian Head Start

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.40 . . *" A variety of opportunities must be created by grantee and delegate agencies for interaction with parents throughout the year. Meetings and interactions with families must be respectful of each family's diversity and cultural and ethnic background."*

The Metlakatla Head Start Program serves families who live on an island in Southeast Alaska where weather can sometimes create a feeling of isolation. They have developed a series of activities that adults can do with children and with other families in the community. Each staff member is responsible for planning and hosting activities for Head Start families. The activities vary from parent brunches to evening activities where families create hats, cookies or share traditional native foods at a potluck. During the months of September/October, 1998, nine separate activities were sponsored by the Metlakatla Head Start program.

Metlakatla Indian Head Start serves children age 3 and 4 through a center-based program in Metlakatla, Alaska.

Head Start Video Newsletters —
Association of Village Council Presidents Head Start.

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.40 . . . *"grantee and delegate agencies must provide parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents, both as individuals and as members of a group. . "*

The AVCP Head Start Program felt that parents were not reading the program newsletter and were not getting important program and educational information. During the 1998 program year, they decided to produce video newsletters. Video newsletters were produced showing what the AVCP program looks like and including information on a specific topic. The first video newsletter was about literacy, the second one was about nutrition. Copies of the video newsletters were sent to each program with the idea that each site would hold a parent meeting and show the video. The video would then be sent home with those parents who were unable to attend the parent meeting. At the end of the year, AVCP conducted to survey to ask parents if they preferred a written or video newsletter. There were mixed reactions, so this year two additional video newsletters will be produced along with a quarterly written newsletter from the central office and monthly mini-newsletters produced at each site.

The Association of Village Council Presidents Head Start serves children ages 3 through 4, in Akiachak, Bethel, Kalskag, Kasigluk, Kotlik, Pilot Station, Quinhagak, Scammon Bay, Tuluksak, Alaska. Services are provided through both center-based and home-visitor programs.

Dental Health — Kawerak Head Start Program

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.20 . . *"obtain from a health care professional a determination as to whether the child is up-to-date on a schedule of age appropriate preventive and primary health care which includes medical, dental and mental health. . . .dental follow up must include: fluoride supplements and treatments as recommended by dental professionals and other necessary preventive measures and further dental treatment by the dental professional. . . "*

Meeting the mandatory requirements for dental screenings and follow-up treatment has always been a challenge for Head Start programs in smaller communities and villages. There are very high rates of dental decay in Alaska and in many rural areas dental care is only available from itinerant dental health professionals. To meet this challenge, Alaska Head Start developed a comprehensive dental wellness program that was piloted in several Head Start programs. Kawerak Head Start is one of the programs that has had continued success with the dental health program. Dental advocates are hired and trained to complete home visits with Head Start families prior to dental screenings and treatment. Families are signed up for Medicaid, if eligible, and those families with insurance complete forms for third party payment to dentists. Adults and children participate in a dental health education program and concerns or questions are dealt with before dental visits. Pediatric dental teams are arranged for and they visit six Kawerak villages as well as Head Start programs administered by RurAL CAP. All Head Start children in the villages of St. Michael, Elim, Koyuk, Gambell, Brevig Mission, Shishmaref, Savoonga and Stebbins receive dental exams and treatment. The dental team also examines and treats other children under the age of six who are not enrolled in Head Start. Children who have serious dental problems may be required to travel to Nome or Anchorage for longer-term or more extensive treatment. Children who have participated in the dental wellness program for several years experi-

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ence fewer cavities and healthier teeth. Without the Head Start program, many young children would not be seen by the regular itinerant dentist because of the needs of older children and adults in these villages.

Kawerak Head Start serves children ages 3 through 4 in Nome, Brevig Mission Diomede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, St Michael, Teller, Wales, and White Mountain, Alaska. Services are provided through shared programs with the public school districts.

Family/Child Care/Employer Partnerships — Chugiak Children's Services.

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.40(a) . . *"grantee and delegate agencies must offer parents opportunities to develop and implement individualized family partnership agreements that describe family goals, responsibilities, timetables and strategies for achieving them." 1304(b) . .(and offer) "opportunities for continuing education and employment training and other employment services through formal and informal networks in the community."*

Chugiak Children's Services (CCS) Head Start serves as a model for services that have been developed to implement this important standard. CCS has developed a comprehensive partnership with other community programs that provides quality child care and support to parents as they return to the work force. Members of this partnership include: Head Start, the Alaska Employment Service, Division of Public Assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Municipality of Anchorage, JTPA Program, Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce, Child Care Connection, Palmer Senior Center Older Workers Program and Joy Child and Family Development Center. Head Start families are referred to the Child Development Center by the Division of Public Assistance and the Alaska Employment Service. The Center is open from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm to accommodate the schedules of working parents. Five Head Start families are currently enrolled at the Center and in turn the Center provides a teacher at the Eagle River Head Start site. Five "drop-in" child care positions are reserved for children ages 3-5 whose parents are receiving training, or taking tests at the Alaska Employment Service. Head Start provides training for staff at the Center and awareness of child care issues that affect workers and the impact these issues have on businesses. Families at the Center receive child development services, as well as support through the Family Support Assistants who help families achieve the goals developed for their Family Partnership Agreement for Head Start and Alaska Temporary Assistance Plan.

Chugiak Children's Services Head Start serves children ages 6 weeks through 5 in Chugiak, Palmer, Wasilla, and Big/Lake Houston, Alaska. Services are provided through center-based, home-visitor, and collaborative programs with other community partners.

Comprehensive Services = Individual Gains — Chugachmuit Head Start

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.21 . . *"provide for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success."*

On a daily basis, Head Start provides comprehensive services to children according to their individual needs. Some children enter Head Start with developmental delays, behavioral problems and other needs that staff, parents and others must address. During the past year, Chugachmuit Head Start helped to address the needs of a remarkable set of twins. Upon entering Head Start, the children had little language, aggressive behaviors, and were unable to focus on daily activities. Over the course of the year, the twins made some amazing gains. They developed good verbal skills, could listen and follow directions, and were able to interact with other children as well as adults. During the Child Find Screening at the Head Start center, the public school special education coordinator screened the twins and was amazed at the growth they had made during their year in Head Start. She attributed their remarkable growth to the Head Start program. Had the program not been in place in this community, these two children would have gotten further behind in their development and entered kindergarten completely ill prepared.

Chugachmuit Head Start serves children ages 3 through 5 in Nanwalek and Port Graham, Alaska. Services are provided through a combination of home-visitor and center-based programs.

Community Partnerships - Kenaitze Indian Tribe Head Start

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.41 - *Community Partnerships. The objective of this standard is to ensure that agencies in the community*

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collaborate in order to provide the highest level of services to children and families and to advocate for a community that shares responsibility for the healthy development of children.

Usually Head Start programs begin to develop partnerships with other community agencies and programs after they have been established and operating for a while. In the Kenai/Soldotna area, however, strong community partnerships already existed that have been advocating for a Head Start program to join their community because of the lack of services for young children in the area. In 1998, The Kenaitze Head Start Program was established to provide services to primarily native families in the Kenai/Soldotna area. The program serves 40 children and their families in a center-based option. They are in the process of working with Tribal Elders to develop and implement a culturally appropriate curriculum. The children have already visited the Tribal greenhouse, the Tribal fishing site and attended an Elder's luncheon. Tribal members and staff have taught children drumming, traditional crafts and are working on Denaina songs and words.

The Kenaitze Indian Head Start Program serves children age 3 and 4 in Kenai, Alaska. Services are provided through a center-based program.

The Alaska Native Home Base Video Project —Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska Head Start Program.

Head Start Performance Standard Subpart B - *Early Childhood Development and Health Services; and Subpart C - Family and Community Partnerships. Head Start's commitment to wellness embraces a comprehensive vision of health and well-being for children, families and staff. Subpart B of the Performance Standards address this vision by setting the standard for a wide range of services for education, early childhood development, nutrition, medical, dental and mental health, prenatal and infant care, and services for children with disabilities. Subpart C addresses the commitment that the entire range of Head Start services must be responsive and appropriate to each child and family's culture, ethnic and linguistic heritage and experience; and parents and family members must be involved in all aspects of the child's Head Start experience.*

Developing a project that embraces the range of Head Start services, commitment to parent involvement, and that is culturally appropriate is a complicated undertaking. The Tlingit and Haida Head Start Program, however, has accomplished this task through the Alaska Home Based Video Project. The project, titled, Ways of Knowing . . Parenting Strategies Through Tradition and Technology, uses new technologies to glean and share Native and other traditions, skills and strategies for understanding and raising children in this unique place we call Southeast Alaska. Through the use of video, increased home visits and supplemental materials, Tlingit and Haida Head Start will be able to reach into the homes and communities they are currently not able to serve - and to serve all families in more meaningful and useful ways, In addition, there are few, if any, early childhood education tools available for parents which embrace the Native culture very much alive in this region. This project will provide Native parents, children and the trainers who work with them, important links to role models and learning from their own culture and backgrounds in all program elements. Project materials include: a Parent Education, Prenatal, Infants and Toddlers video series of 15 - 10 minute videos ; a Preschool series of 21 - 20 minute videos; training, teaching materials, and home-visiting components for each of the video topics. The advantages of the Ways of Knowing project include:

- Prenatal parents, parents of infants and toddlers will have relevant materials they can use and view in the home between visits by Head Start and other program trainers.
- All video products are designed for use in the home by parents and children. The videos can also be distributed and seen on local television in all rural/urban areas in the state.
- Ongoing technical training of local Head Start staff to use video series appropriately with parents.
- A workbook to extend the concepts addressed in each video will be produced in the second year of the project to provide extended support to parents.

The Ways of Knowing project was funded by the (national) Department of Education to Tlingit and Haida Head Start. Project materials were developed by an Advisory committee, made up of Head Start, Infant Learning Programs, Southeast Regional Health Clinic, cultural experts and other childhood development programs. An international video production firm, RXL Pulitzer has produced the video series.

Tlingit and Haida Head Start serves children age birth through 4 through both home-visitor and center-based programs. Head Start programs are located in Angoon, Hoonah, Klawock, Prince of Wales, Petersburg, Saxman, Juneau, Sitka, Wrangell, and Yakutat, Alaska.

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On-site Health Care - Southcentral Foundation Head Start
Head Start Performance Standard 1304.20 Child Health; 1304.23 Child Nutrition; and 1304.24 Child Mental Health. *"Head Start grantees and delegate agencies must assist parents: in completing a schedule of health screenings, well-child exams, follow-up treatment for medical, dental and physical conditions; identifying each child's nutritional needs, obtaining a nutritional assessment and receiving nutritional information relevant to the child's well-being; and developing a regular schedule of on-site mental health consultations involving mental health professionals staff and parents."*

Meeting the Head Start standards for health, nutrition and mental health care can be a daunting task for many Head Start families who do not have access to health care providers. The Southcentral Head Start Program has developed a system of health care that eliminates many of the obstacles parents and staff face in meeting the health care needs of children. Southcentral Foundation has established an on-site medical clinic where physicians and medical providers come to provide clinical services to the children and families enrolled in the Head Start program. Children receive physical exams, immunizations, well child exams, growth assessment, nutrition assessment, vision and hearing screening and other health related services. Families are also seen at the clinic for well baby, well child, sick child and family medicine services. Providers also conduct on site education sessions for prevention services and healthy lifestyle promotion. Additional on-site health services include: an on-site Mental Health Consultant who provides mental health services to the enrolled children and their families; a dental clinic where dentists and hygienists come to the center and do initial exams as well as restorative treatment and preventative treatment; and a Registered dietitian who does nutrition and growth assessments as well as conducts on-site classes on healthy food choices.

Southcentral Foundation Head Start provides comprehensive services to over 150 children age 2 through 4 and their families in the Anchorage area.

Infant/Toddler Model Program —
Fairbanks Native Association Early Head Start
Head Start Performance Standard 1304.21. *"Grantee and delegate agencies' program of services for infants and toddlers must encourage . . . development of secure out-of- home attachments, trust and emotional security so that each child can explore the environment according to his or her own developmental level, .. support social and emotional development, . . .communication, . . .physical development . . health and nutrition needs."*

The Fairbanks Native Association Early Head Start Program began serving children age 6 weeks through 3 years in November, 1998. The program serves 8 children with two teachers. Care is available four days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. A federal Early Head Start grant covers 6 hours of daily expenses, the other hours are the responsibility of parents. The program focuses on the needs of the families and the individual needs of the children in all domains and places a strong emphasis on nurturing child/care giver relationships. Staff have chosen not to use high chairs, baby seats, cribs or swings. They believe the teacher is the person that can best support development of the child. Young children are fed in the arms of the teacher and when they are old enough to sit in a chair, they join the older children at the table. Cribs and swings are not used because they restrict movement and choices for infants and toddlers.

Fairbanks Native Association Early Head Start Program serves infants and toddlers through a center-based program in Fairbanks.

Family Partnerships — Fairbanks Native Association
Head Start Performance Standard 1304. *40 Family Partnerships and 1304. 50 Program Governance. Head Start grantees and delegate agencies must build partnerships with parents to establish mutual trust, identify family goals, strengths, necessary services and other supports. As part of this partnership, Head Start must establish opportunities for parents to achieve goals and receive necessary services and supports. Head Start programs must also establish with parents and families a process of shared decision-making and program governance through Parent Committees and Policy Councils.*

Once a month the Fairbanks Native Association demonstrates their successful efforts to build partnerships with parents, and community members. They have a strong eight member Parent Policy Council which meets each month. Each meeting this year has had perfect attendance from both the appointed members as well as the elected alternates to the Council. In addition, other interested parents have also been attending the meetings. The Council keeps establishing new policies that enhance the quality of services provided by the Head Start program. The most recent action is the new alcohol policy that states Head Start meetings or gatherings will not take place in an establishment that sells alcohol and that includes popular fast food restaurants that are often used by local families. Each month, parent potlucks are held as well that have been extremely succe ful and well attended. Their success is due in part to increased contacts with parents and families. There were more phone calls made to parents, monthly calendars and reminder flyers sent to

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parents regarding up-coming activities. The result of increased communications with parents is standing room only space at the gatherings. FNA invites anyone who may be interested to workshops and meetings to attend, not just parents. Many friends of families and staff from other programs in the community take advantage of workshops. Topics discussed at the meetings are planned to be relevant and related to needs of families such as "Positive Discipline" which is being presented in January. FNA feels that with more effort and encouragement extended to parents, more involvement is received; and the more parent involvement, the better services Head Start can provide through the child's first and most important teachers - parents and families.

The Fairbanks Native Association serves children age prenatal through 4 in the Fairbanks, Alaska area. Services are provided through both center-based and home-visitor programs.

Community Services — Golden Heart Head Start

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.41 (a)(2). *"Grantee and delegate agencies must take affirmative steps to establish ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations to promote the access of children and families to community services that are responsive to their needs and to ensure that Early Head Start and Head Start programs respond to community needs."*

The community of Fairbanks has established a site where multiple services are available for their children and families. The Carol Brice Center serves as a resource and program delivery center that mirrors the complex needs of many families. Programs located in this center include the Golden Heart Head Start Program, Women/Infants/Children (WIC) nutrition program, a health clinic, the Fairbanks Family Literacy Project, a job training and employment resource program, a child care program, and parent education program "Parenting is a Mixed Bag." This comprehensive service center provides benefits not only for families, but also for programs. Parents and families are able to use the job training center, and in particular its computer lab, to take classes, look for job opportunities, prepare resumes and share ideas with other adults. Families can access medical care through the health clinic, receive nutrition education and sign up for the WIC food program. Families can also receive important parenting supports through the parenting education program and access to a quality child care program.

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The Golden Heart Head Start Program is continually realizing benefits from the community services center. Head Start has a Memorandum of Understanding with the health clinic to provide health screenings and follow-up. A Head Start staff member serves on the health clinic board to help plan services and training needs. Training and education programs for staff and families are shared which helps reduce programs costs and broaden the types of training available. Head Start staff has found that helping families meet the goals in their family plans, like job training, securing employment, improving literacy, or getting health care, is more realistic because the services families need are so accessible.

Golden Heart Head Start Program serves children ages 3 through 4 in the Fairbanks, Alaska area. Services are provided through both center-based and home-visitor programs.

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Alaska Head Start Stats
(1992–1998)

	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		TOTAL	comments/analysis
HS Children Served	2,081		2,645		3,020		3,259		3,228		3,177		3,232		20,642	eligible children served
Families	1,987		2,377		2,730		2,974		2,872		2,864		2,870		18,654	# families
Diagnosed Handicapped	263		300		376		404		397		405		440		2,585	13% diagnosed handicap
Completed Med Screen	1,613	78%	1,870	71%	1,864	62%	2,100	64%	2,394	74%	2,116	67%	2,078	64%	14,039	68% completed medical screening
Screened Dental	1,498	72%	1,903	72%	1,945	64%	2,179	67%	2,366	73%	2,140	67%	2,021	63%	14,056	68% completed dental screening
Immunized	1,763	85%	2,376	90%	2,670	88%	2,828	87%	3,066	95%	2,995	94%	2,976	92%	18,679	90% completed immunization
w/CDA Credentials	93		97		112		106		127		140		186			staff with CDA
HS Staff	380		469		532		575		592		593		615			HS staff
Staff is/was HS parent	225		218		285		276		262		274		321			parents now staff
Bilingual Staff	161		185		220		219		258		224		220			bilingual staff
Communities HS serves	68		79		88		88		92		94		94			communities HS serves
Volunteer Hours			66,487		73,759		69,360		85,145		94,118		96,763		485,632	volunteer hours
Age @ Enrollment: Prenatal			23		12		12		14		27		15		103	0% prenatal
0-1			100		145		119		114		103		167		748	4% 0-1
1-2			85		120		138		117		143		165		768	4% 1-2
2-3			163		224		465		395		320		491		2,058	10% 2-3
3-4			1,012		1,231		1,440		1,238		1,400		1,345		7,666	37% 3-4
4-5			1,262		1,290		1,085		1,337		1,183		1,033		7,190	35% 4-5
Ethnicity: Native			1,879		2,081		2,106		2,161		2,177		2,157		12,561	68% Native
Asian			40		56		76		63		88		83		406	2% Asian
Black			132		173		200		169		168		164		1,006	5% Black
Hispanic			66		87		125		140		146		136		700	4% Hispanic
White			528		621		692		663		591		624		3,719	20% White
State $	4,772,509		5,585,045		5,613,376		5,937,530		5,674,268		5,697,103		5,489,951		$36,769,784	27% state investment
Federal $	5,186,919		8,496,281		10,325,991		12,454,130		12,580,937		13,379,230		15,603,694		$76,027,182	55% federal investment
Community $	1,767,556		2,241,876		2,665,979		2,815,473		3,210,660		3,546,717		4,249,339		$20,397,600	14% community investment
Other	103,327		111,454		209,324		159,480		267,698		124,616		141,389		$1,117,288	1% other
USDA $	346,750		470,694		597,784		615,525		632,184		710,115		743,332		$4,116,384	3% usda-ccfp

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Alaska Head Start State Collaboration Project:
Making a Difference Statewide

In October 1997, the State of Alaska was awarded a second Head Start State Collaboration Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of the State Collaboration Grant is to create partnerships between Head Start and programs that provide services and support to children and families throughout the state. During the first five-year grant period, significant partnerships and programs were developed between Head Start, the Alaska Head Start Association, state and federal agencies, private and non-profit organizations, communities, schools, and businesses. The second five-year grant will allow the state to strengthen these partnerships.

Through partnerships, the goals of the Collaboration Grant will be implemented. These goals include:

- **Expanding and improving Head Start services** by working with the Alaska State Legislature, Alaska Children's Cabinet, state and federal agencies, businesses, community organizations, Alaska Head Start Association, the Head Start Region X & XI, the Technical Assistance Resource Center, and the Resource Access Project.
- **Improving services for children with disabilities** through transition planning and partnerships with schools, Infant Learning Programs, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Board, and other state departments.
- **Improving outcomes for at-risk children and families** through support and promotion of the Alaska Children's Trust Fund, home visiting programs, Head Start Family Wellness models, quality child care, and appropriate family literacy programs.
- **Providing education and technical assistance about Head Start programs** to schools, advisory groups, and the public through the Alaska's Children Newsletter, participation on various boards and committees, and training opportunities.
- **Improving the health and well-being of Alaska's children and families** by integrating Head Start mental health and dental health models into an "Alaska Plan" with Head Start Region X and XI, state, and community health plans.
- **Supporting economic self-sufficiency for Alaska's low-income families** by participating in the assessment, development, and implementation of Alaska's welfare reform efforts, health care planning, child care, job training, and other efforts for low-income children and families.
- **Maintaining the social, academic, health, and emotional gains of Head Start children and families** in public school through transition planning models, establishing a career development plan for early childhood educators and care givers, and supporting parent/family involvement in their children's education.
- **Providing support to the Alaska Head Start grantees** through technical assistance to Head Start staff, the Alaska Head Start Association; and maintaining Head Start data through the Child Plus III statewide management information system.
- **Providing support for appropriate high quality early childhood programs.**

For more information about the Head Start Collaboration Project, contact the Alaska Head Start Office, Department of Community and Regional Affairs at (907) 465-4860.

The Alaska Head Start Collaboration Grant is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, National Head Start Bureau.

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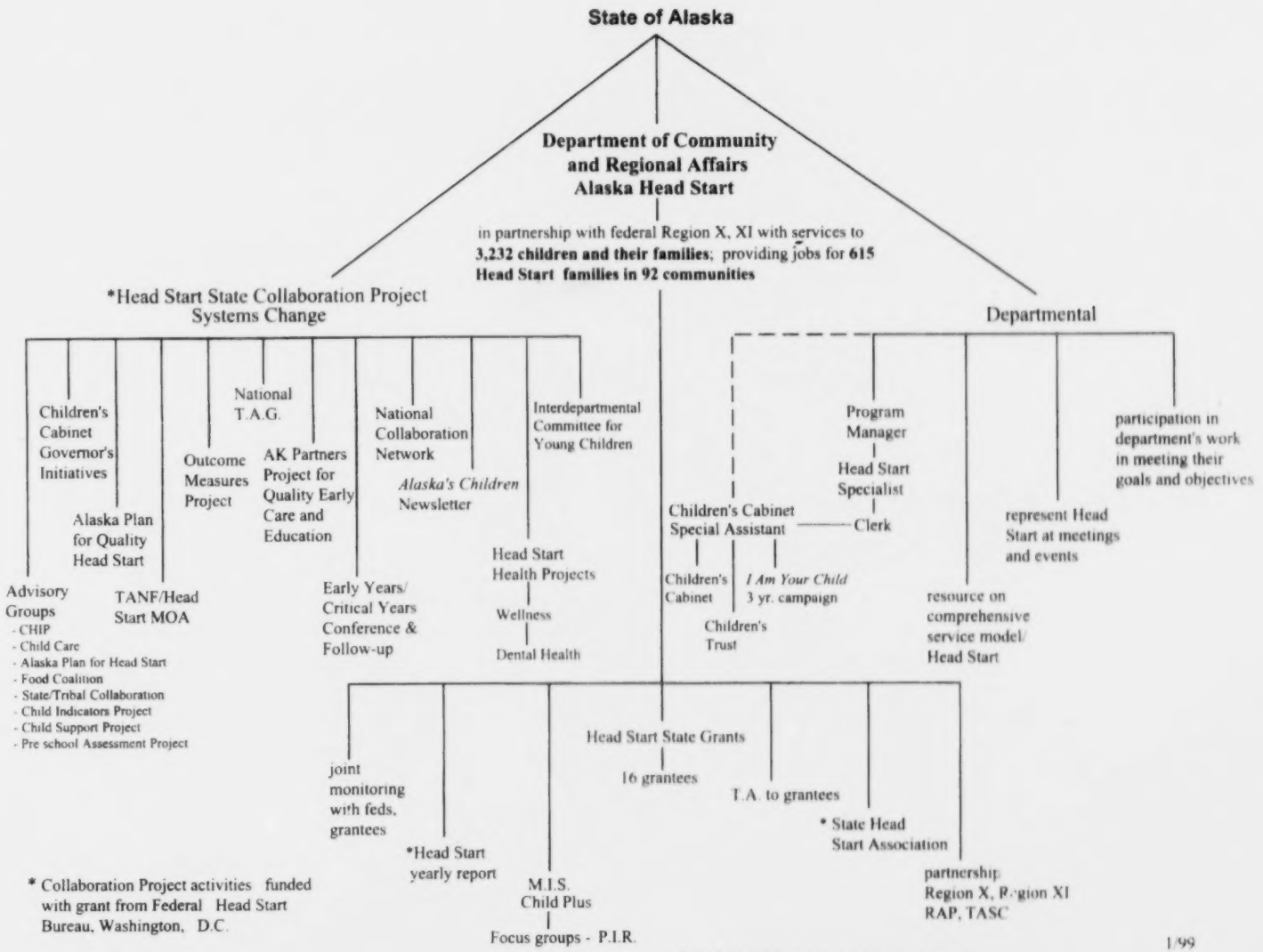
State of Alaska
Department of Community and Regional Affairs
Alaska Head Start
in partnership with federal Region X, XI with services to
3,232 children and their families; providing jobs for 615
Head Start families in 92 communities
*Head Start State Collaboration Project
Systems Change
Children's Cabinet Governor's Initiatives
Alaska Plan for Quality Head Start
Outcome Measures Project
National T.A.G.
AK Partners Project for Quality Early Care and Education
National Collaboration Network
Alaska's Children Newsletter
Interdepartmental Committee for Young Children
Advisory Groups
- CHIP
- Child Care
- Alaska Plan for Head Start
- Food Coalition
- State/Tribal Collaboration
- Child Indicators Project
- Child Support Project
- Pre school Assessment Project
TANF/Head Start MOA
Early Years/ Critical Years Conference & Follow-up
Head Start Health Projects
Wellness
Dental Health
Departmental
Program Manager
Head Start Specialist
Clerk
Children's Cabinet Special Assistant
Children's Cabinet
I Am Your Child 3 yr. campaign
Children's Trust
represent Head Start at meetings and events
participation in department's work in meeting their goals and objectives
resource on comprehensive service model/ Head Start
Head Start State Grants
16 grantees
T.A. to grantees
* State Head Start Association
partnership: Region X, Region XI RAP, TASC
joint monitoring with feds, grantees
*Head Start yearly report
M.I.S. Child Plus
Focus groups - P.I.R.
* Collaboration Project activities funded with grant from Federal Head Start Bureau, Washington, D.C.

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Alaska Head Start Directors and Support Systems

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Assc Inc.
Dora Moore, Director
401 E Fireweed Lane Suite 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
wk: 276-2700 fx: 278-1751

ALPA-Golden Heart Head Start. - X
Holly Wells, Director
1949 Gillam Way
Fairbanks, AK 99701
wk: 456-4267 fx:452-4203

AVCP Head Start AIPB
Joyce Dey, Director
P.O. Box 219
Bethel, AK 99559
wk: 543-3157 fx:543-5590
Joyce_Dey@avcp.org

Bristol Bay Native Association - X
Valerie Larson, Director
P.O. Box 310
Dillingham, AK 99576
wk: 842-4059/800-478-5257
FAX: 842-2338
vall@bbna.com

Central Council of Tlingit & Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska AIPB
Nila Rinehart, Director
320 West Willoughby Ave., Ste 300
Juneau, AK 99801
wk: 586-1432/800-344-1432
FAX: 586-8970
nila@ccthtest.ptialaska.net

Chugachmiut - AIPB
Bonnie Powell, Director
P.O. Box 3070
Homer, Alaska 99603
wk: 235-0572/235-0577
FAX 235-0573
Headstar@ptialaska.net

Chugiak Children's Services - X
Charlie Johanson-Adams, Director
16515 Centerfield Drive, Suite 200
Eagle River, AK 99577
Admin: 694-6011 Fax: 694-6029
Chugiak: 688-2660 Fax: 688-1309
Palmer: 746-4483 Fax: 746-5183
Wasilla: 373-7795 Fax: 373-8752
Big Lake: 892-7165
Cja@ccsadmin.org

Fairbanks Native Association AIPB
Brenda Krupa, Director
201 First Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
wk: 456-4989 fx:456-5311
bkrupa@mosquitonet.com

Fairbanks Native Association
Early Head Start AIPB
Valerie Naquin, Director
609 3rd Street Suite 200
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
wk: 451-8814 fx:451-8815
fnaehs@hotmail.com

Kawerak Head Start AIPB
Jo Putman, Director
P.O. Box 948
Nome, AK 99762
wk: 443-5294 fx:443-5570
headstart@nome.net

Kenaitze Indian Tribe, IRA
Loretta Harvey, Director
PO Box 988
Kenai, Alaska 99611
wk:283-3633 fx: 283-3052

Kids' Corps Inc. - X
Sandi Haynes, Director
3710 E. 20th, Ste 2
Anchorage, AK 99508
wk: 272-0133 fx:272-0312
kci@alaska.net

Metlakatla Indian Comm. AIPB
Theo McIntyre, Director
P.O. Box 8
Metlakatla, AK 99926
wk: 886-5151 fx:886-5314

RurAL CAP Head Start - X
Shirley Pittz, Rural Head Start Dir.
P.O. Box 200908
Anchorage, AK 99520
wk: 279-2511/800-478-7227
FAX: 279-6343/800-478-6343
Pittz@ruralcap.com

Upper Tanana Head Start
Pam Gingue, Director
P.O. Box 459
Tok, AK 99780
wk: 883-5159 fx: 883-5160
utdc@polar.net

Southcentral Foundation AIPB
MaryEllen Fritz, Director
1818 W. Northern Lights
Anchorage, Alaska 99517
wk: 276-4323 fx: 278-0627
mfritz@citci.com

Tanana Chiefs Conference AIPB
Sarah Kuenzli, Dir.
122 First Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
wk: 452-8251 #3172/800-478-6822
FAX: 459-3851, 3852
Skuenzli@polarnet.com

Native Village of Tyonek
Connie Burnell
PO Box 82070
Tyonek, Alaska 99682
wk: 583-2115 fx:583-2442

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

REGION X
Nancy Hutchins/ Gloree Davis
Region X M/S RX-32
2201 6th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98121
wk: 206-615-2557 fx: 206-615-2574
nhutchins@acf.dhhs.gov
gdavis@acf.dhhs.gov

REGION XI AIPB
AMERICAN INDIAN PROG. BRANCH
Helen Schierbeck, Chief (Rm 2231)
Marguerite Andreu, Prog. Spec
Mary Switzer Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
HS wk: 202-205-8437
MA wk: 202-205-8628
FAX: 202-205-8436
Hscheirbeck@acf.dhhs.gov
mandreu@acf.dhhs.gov

Alaska State DCRA - Head Start
Marilyn Webb/ Brent Cappell
P.O. Box 112100
Juneau, AK 99811-2100
MWwk: 465-4861 FAX: 465-8638
BCwk: 465-4862
mwebb@comregaf.state.ak.us
bcappell@comregaf.state.ak.us

TRAINING & TA NETWORK

QIC REG X & XI/DISQC REG X
ALASKA SATELLITE
Prevention Associates, Inc
Sally Mead/Bonny Headley
101 E 9th Ave Suite 7A
Anchorage, Ak 99501
wk: 272-6925 FAX: 272-6946
email: smead@alaska.net
bonny@pobox.alaska.net

QIC & DSQIC REG X
Portland State University
Cari Olmsted
P.O. Box 1491
Portland, OR 97207
wk: 1-800-547-8887, #4815
FAX: 503-725-4838
email:cari@ses.pdx.edu

QIC REGION XI AIPB
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
Anita Chisholm, Executive Director
Patricia Iron Cloud, Director
555 Constitution Street Rm 237
Norman, Oklahoma 73072-7820
Main: 405-325-4127 Main Office
FAX: 405-325-7757 Main Fax
email: aihsqic@cce.occe.ou.edu

DISQIC REGION XI AIPB
THREE FEATHERS ASSOC.
Euel Pittman, Specialist
PO Box 5508
Norman, Oklahoma 73070
wk: 405-360-2919
FAX: 405-360-3069
email:dsqic@threefeathersassoc.com